

**Westbury Community Garden
General Meeting Board Minutes
July 18, 2023
6:30 – 7:46 p.m. via Zoom**

In attendance, Wayne Slaikeu, Debbie Gordon, Dorthy Smith, Kat Elder, Betina Wolfowicz, and Steve Goldberg

- I. Meeting called to order by the President, Debbie Gordon.
- II. **Old Business** – We ordered soil but it seems to be disappearing. I think people might be taking it home.
- III. A motion was made to approve the June minutes by Kat Elder and seconded by Debbie Gordon. The motion was approved.
- IV. Bob Randall's Book – We have 7 books ordered and need 3 more orders. The Education Committee will handle picking up the books from Bob Randall, the money and distribution. Kat Elder will donate her old Bob Randall books. The cost for Bob Randall's Book is \$35.00
- V. The **police motor home** was removed from our property on July 7, 2023. Mr. Bishop Murray came personally, to remove it.
- VI. Fence –WAIC cancelled their meetings in June and July. The apartment complex does not appear committed to fixing the hole in the fence nor does Valero. The Heights Post Oak Apartments have been sold again. WAIC – The city (Sheri Cortez an attorney with the Harris County District Attorney's office) was supposed to be taking legal action against them. The apartments are known as a hot spot for crime.
- VII **New Business** – Tallow trees have not been removed.
- VIII Mulch Project – Currently four aisles on A, 3 aisles on C, 1 on D and 3-1/2 on E need to be mulched. Volunteers will remove the nutgrass on Saturday. Stepping stones are to be removed from E2-E3 aisle and aisle needs to be weeded. Soil needs to be skimmed off C13 aisle. Hopefully the mulch project should be done next week 7/29/23.
- IX PIFF – Rachel Folkerts was informed that there is nothing preventing permanent structures, in the lease, on the property and that our lease is good until 2027. They might need COH permits for any planned structures. This may cause PIFF to opt for a less permanent structure like shade sails to avoid the lengthy permitting process.

There are quarterly inspections of PIFF's property for trash and trenching. Hazel Potvin reported there is no water or soil running off the property into the street. Friday, 7/21/23 Becky Edmondson, Rachel Folkerts, Hazel Potvin and Debbie Gordon will walk through the property.

- X. Evening Work Days – Kat Elder has proposed an evening work day from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. We can try this even though the days are getting shorter. Kat would like an announcement made in the Newsletter starting July 25, 2023. The shed will be open. Debbie Gordon made a motion for a Tuesday work day.
- XI. Weed Letters – B9 occupant is gone. D10 is being solarized and will be ready for occupancy in the fall along with B9. C10 Weed letter sent 7/17/23 in addition to a text telling them to open their email. They have 10 days to bring their bed into compliance. E2 has overfilled their bed. E2 stated they had purchased the soil. A13 has ragweed and other weeds in their bed that need to be removed.
- XII. Cameras, and motion detector lights – If we purchased any they will need to be placed up high to prevent theft. Kat Elder has asked Don Finley to search for the best/ easiest cameras and motion detector lights to use and access and the least expensive since he's in law enforcement and is familiar with them.
- XIII. **American Community Garden Tour 9/28/23 – 9/29/23.** They wish to tour our garden. Betsy Longoria will verify and confirm the time and date for our garden.
- XIV. Summer Potluck – Should we have an evening potluck in the garden under the pavilion when it's cooler? Will place in newsletter.
- XV. E9 Bed – We are still working on this bed. We need a straight line and some of the blocks will need to be removed.
- XVI. Sign/Soil/Mulch – A sign needs to be put on the soil/mulch saying not to take it home and a tarp needs to be placed over it. We have 20x30 tarps that can be used.
- XVII. Pest Control – We need a Pest Control person.
- XVIII. Debbie Gordon will cover for Franco Posa (Vice President) when he is not here.

XIX. Reports

A. Bee Committee Report – Steve Ewing/Debbie Gordon – July 18, 2023

Steve has, for the first time, harvested honey from our hives! He delivered 15 half pint jars to me and has 24 more coming. This was about 2.75 gallons of honey. He has held some back for the apiary committee and some will go to Becky Stemper. Steve expects he will be able to harvest about twice that amount next year.

Each board member will get a half pint jar. Certain gardeners who have gone above and beyond helping with the mulch project will also get one. I'll have the honey with me Thursday evening and Saturday morning. Please come and get yours.

There's not enough to give every gardener one so we'll have to decide how to use them. Debbie

Apiary Pollinator Bed – Kat Elder, July 18, 2023

Coral Vine is very happy but I'm still not seeing many bees (maybe too hot for foraging???). Purple Bee Balm has finished blooming; Frogfruit is covering the bed & all water containers in the bed. Am trying to keep the ragweed & wild geranium pulled to allow limited water to desirables. And keep the Eastend weeds from migrating into this bed.

The WCG Bees remain very thirsty! The A7, B6 & B5 water containers are essential to service their needs. Also, coolers for toads & anoles. I'm hoping other members are providing clean, shallow, waterers with rocks/sticks & slow watering to prevent bee drownings.

Board Reminder: The Watering Committee Manager position remains Vacant; is important to be filled in order to organize / issue reminders/ encourage subs with the fewer member volunteers in order to keep our BF & Orchard common area plants alive. **Admin: Please continue to publish this position.**

B. Community Outreach & Fundraising Report – Debbie Gordon, July 18, 2023

Community Outreach

- Met community garden leader, Josh Singleton, from The Neighborhood Garden Project in Katy. Located on a church property, the garden has 44 donation beds and 30+ allotment beds. Josh has lots of commercial farming and orchard experience and was the manager of the Village Farm at Harvest Green Farm in Richmond.

- American Community Garden Association conference
HCC Alief Hayes Campus (Westchase area)
Sept 27 Reception
Sept 28-29 Workshops
Sept 30 Tours and SE TX Grand Finale event
Cost - \$250 for joining members, \$205 for current members

Fundraising

Grant applications

- O'Quinn Foundation grant is in the works. (Phase 1 driveway and parking)

C. Compost Report – Hazel Potvin – July 18, 2023

Please do not use compost bins or coffee storage area as a storage place for cardboard or logs and other stuff. We actively work on those bins and have a process. We try to keep the area looking good. Logs laying around are a real danger if you step on one and fall down.

We have put in a new smaller Kitchen Waste trash can. It might be easier to turn into the bins when it needs to be emptied. It means more trash cans are available for leaves.

We had hoped to have a picture of the new gate at compost bin 1 but it still hasn't been installed. Mike will be helping with it this coming week.

Break Through Houston: We did have a fabulous group of students helping to turn the two other bins and clean up the coffee collection area. What a gift to get strong young students eager to help at the garden!

We are **not really using the chaff from coffee bean processing**. It tends to get very gummy in the compost pile. We also don't want coconuts in the piles. How long must it take for those to decompose?

We have lost a thermometer. If anyone knows where it is, let us know. We do rely on them to tell us how a pile is doing.

There are bags of compost in bin 1 take them to enrich any gardens getting prepared for new gardeners. We need to clear them out. Bin 3 has compost that is close to being ready.

Hazel Potvin, Betina Wolfowicz, George Rejsek, Rich Keogh

D. Membership Report – Ray Sher – July 18, 2023

A big thank you to Shelly and Roy for starting the cleanup of B9 and to Mike Rowan for clearing the rest of the aisles and the bed. The Clear the Bed Team has been busy, first clearing D10 (thank you Marsha) and then B9.

Bed E9 is in the process of being elevated. When it is, we will be looking for someone who needs an elevated bed. We will try first with our existing gardeners. Membership would like the possibility to be announced in the next Thursday newsletter.

There are two other beds (B9 and D10) that will be available in the fall.

Two prospective members have had orientations and are possibilities for membership. There will very likely be more people inquiring as we get nearer to fall planting time and cooler weather.

E. Pocket Prairie – Hazel Potvin – July 18, 2023

Drive slowly by the pocket prairie and see the Liatris (commonly known as gayfeather and blazing star) in bloom.



F. Specialty Garden Report – Kat Elder – July 18, 2023

Butterfly Beds: Little to report. I was working with a client and couldn't attend the 6/24 Workday. One Committee member attended but could not solicit any help since the garden emphasis was on vacant garden clearing, aisle weeding/cardboard cover, readied for mulching.

After the heavy rains, I spent time removing trash & easily weeding ragweed, Bermuda and weed grasses. Beds do look fine with Zinnia seeds coming up.

Will work there 7/22/23 workday. Prior leaf and pine mulch has helped keep the weeds down. Am still treating ants in B1 pollinator bed, collection and weeding/trash removal in my little spare time.

G. Site Maintenance Report – Wayne Slaikeu – July 18, 2023

I am happy to report, that some violations of garden rules were corrected such as illegal sunflowers were removed, and an illegal tree was removed, but more work is needed. Plants such as Malabar and Amaranth need to be stopped from going to seed and removal of plants not permitted such as mint and removal of dead plants such as Cosmos that are still dropping seeds in the aisles.

REMEMBER the new mulch is looking great now, but it will be a great place for seeds to grow when it gets wet and starts decomposing into compost, and it will do so, very quickly, in our hot summer weather.

We still have potential theft issues to be addressed. Kat and I observed a couple of people (nongardeners), walking through the garden and checking plants for ripe vegetables by flashlight, Kat yelled to them that the garden is closed at dusk and they acknowledged that they heard her but did not leave and continued their walk. We need to emphasize with gardeners that they need to leave when it gets dark and to encourage their garden neighbors to leave at dark also, and to tell any non-gardeners they see at dusk that the garden closes at dusk. Do we emphasize this enough? We might also mention to the constables patrolling our area that we would appreciate them checking people with flashlights in the garden after dark.

H. Treasurer's Report – Marcia Hartman – July 18, 2023

Westbury Community Garden
Profit and Loss YTD Comparison
July 2023

TOTAL
 JUL 2023 JAN - JUL, 2023 (YTD)

Income	July 2023	YTD – January -July
Garden Income		
Donations to WCG	15.00	1,720.15
Fundraising		14,427.95
Garden rental		5,219.20
Volunteer Hours Paid		572.00
Total Garden Income	15.00	21,939.30
Total Income	15.00	21,939.30
GROSS PROFIT	15.00	21,939.30
Expenses		
Garden Operation		
Activities		26.01
Fund Raising Expenses		1,815.14
Garbage /Trash /Dumpster	457.82 (July and August)	1,013.92
Garden Printing		10.01
Garden Supplies	184.38	285.03
IT		781.82
Legal/Professional/Bank Fees		
Fees -Stripe		107.56
PayPal Fees	.92	144.45
Total Legal/Professional Bank Fees	.92	252.01
Membership Dues		128.00
Pest Control		114.87
Portapotty		532.59
Raised Bed Project		1,832.39
Seeds		-70.48
Site Maintenance		357.10
Soil Sales to Gardeners		-984.50
Soil, Mulch, Fertilizer	700.00	2,185.00
Square Fees		18.06
Water	521.83	1,559.79
Total Garden Operations	1,864.95	9,856.76
Total Expenses	1,864.95	9,856.76
Total Operating Income	-1,864.95	12,082.54
Net Income	-1864.95	12,082.54

I. Volunteer Coordinator Report – Betina Wolfowicz – July 18, 2023

June and the first 2 weeks of July have been busy months.

The end of June we had volunteers from Casa Sunzal. Casa Sunzal didn't come today 7/22/23 but we had 3 terrific individual volunteers plus Shelly, Roy, Wayne, Shannon. We got a lot done.

In July, Debbie led the project of removing all the weeds from the aisles, as well as old astroturf, carpets, old cardboard etc. after weeding, the aisles were covered with cardboard and mulch.

The work in this project is performed every Saturday with the help of garden volunteers. Mostly members worked on Saturdays the 1 and 8 of July.

Then on Wednesday the July 12 we hosted the administrative staff of KIPP MOSAIC ACADEMY. They worked for about an hour and then we had about 1 hour of brainstorming about the possibility of KIPP student groups coming to cover some of their curriculum objectives at the garden. The school goes up to 9th grade. They will open more grades as this first cohort grows up. The dialogue was interesting, full of ideas, and hopefully some more permanent interaction will blossom from it.

On Friday July 14, under an implacable sun, we had a large group (about 25) of 9th graders from Breakthrough Houston. They are doing summer camp, led by coaches from Americorps. A few kids worked on bagging compost, and mixing the active piles, while the rest weeded aisles.

On Saturday July 15, besides some returning individual volunteers, Casa Sunzal will come back, and continue the weeding and mulching.

XX. Meeting Adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Submitted by Dorothy Smith – WCG Secretary